

## THE PRINCIPAL'S LEADERSHIP STYLE IN IMPROVING TEACHER PERFORMANCE AT SMPN 1 DARUL IMARAH ACEH BESAR

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### ABSTRACT

Teacher performance is factor important in determine the success of the educational process . However , various problem like low discipline , lack of motivation work , and weakness mastery of learning strategies Still become challenges in the environment school . In condition said , head school own role strategic as leader capable education increase teacher professionalism and performance through implementation style effective leadership . Research This aim For analyze style leadership head school in increase teacher performance , discipline teacher work , as well as obstacles faced in effort improvement Teacher performance at SMPN 1 Darul Imarah. Research use approach qualitative with method descriptive . Data collected through observation , interview in-depth , and study documentation involving head school , deputy principal school , and teachers as subject research. Results study show that head school apply style leadership combinative and adaptive that integrates approach transformational , transactional , visionary, and situational . Transformational style realized through motivation , coaching , and role model ; style transactional through implementation rules , rewards , and sanctions ; visionary style through delivery vision schools and teacher involvement in achievement purpose ; whereas style situational implemented with adapt approach leadership to conditions and character of teachers. Implementation various style leadership the capable create environment collaborative , conducive , and improvement - oriented work quality education . Obstacles faced covering limitations facilities and infrastructure , low discipline some teachers, as well as lack of mastery of learning strategies . For overcome it , head school do coaching , training , supervision and procurement facility supporters . Findings This show that style leadership head school play a role significant in increase teacher performance and effectiveness learning .

Keywords: *Leadership Style, Principal, Teacher Performance, Discipline Work, Leadership Transformational.*

### INTRODUCTION

Education is investment term long enough promising as instrument For increase dignity , honor and civilization something nation . Its progress and decline civilization something nation marked with quality education society . education is a process of formation character individual student For reach perfection ethics , have skills , sharpness analysis , ability read self , speak use verbal and nonverbal language . (Haris, 2018)

Quality education will determined by ability leader in manage institution education For present atmosphere academic , and coaching process participant quality education to be able to become a person who controls Science and Technology and Faith and Faith . According to Haris (2018), the success or failure of an educational program will determined by ability leadership head school as actors and holders role main implementing the leadership process education and learning . The organization will develop until known by people when existence a solid foundation in it , namely good and capable leadership influence behavior the individuals he leads .

According to Hemphill and Coons (1998) leadership is behavior from a individual who leads all over activity group with shared goal with Work The same leaders and those who are led . Baharuddin and Umiarso (2018) explain that leadership as activities carried out with objective influence others to Work The same For reach goals that have been determined . According to



Bigalke and Neubauer as quoted by Rahman (2013) that organization education own very large and dominant influence with existence leader . In institution education , leaders called head school or the head of the madrasah is one of the part from determinant success education . (R. Bogdan et al., 2016)

As realized that School is one of the type organizations that frequently called organization formal education . One of them element its most important organization is human beings . Personnel internal organization school consists of from head school , teachers, students or students and administrative staff . Activities the main thing they do it is activity Study teaching . In frame achievement objective organization , without existence something business Work The same from all personnel organization as well as supported by the existence of whether or not available facilities and infrastructure , then it is very impossible objective something institution education can achieved . Leader education as Top Leader in A institutions education formulate and communicate clear vision and mission in advance education . ( Danim , 2010)

Rosdiana A. Bakar (2015) explains that head School is leader education level unit education , which must be responsible answer to all over activity activity School . Principal school is a very important person in system school . They strive for , maintain rules and discipline , providing necessary items , implementing and improving school programs , as well select and develop employees / personnel .

Problem leadership is one of the very current issues For discussed , because leadership is a process that influences activity somebody For reach objective in situation certain . in a way psychological man in A the organization really needs a leader Good in scale big whether small , leader in A organization is a person who can move others to can Work The same in operate or move organization mentioned below his leadership . According to Danim (2005) “ style leadership is A corner view different from considerate leader what is really done contradictory with underlying characteristics .” (Haris, 2018 )

According to Suharsimi Arikunto (2014) assignment leadership head school in a way general is give motivation to teachers to carry out his duties self with task the main thing , so that in the learning process teach with good and bad harm child educate .

Head school as leader in a way direct is example real in activity Work his subordinates . Head a diligent , careful , caring school to subordinate will different with style indifferent leadership not indifferent , less communicative especially arrogant with community his school . Head burden school No light , for can coordinate system capable work satisfying various party No easy . Although thus head good school must own scale priority Work with No ignore task main as head school .

Head school in his leadership process always related with style leadership style he uses . Leadership style head school influential to performance personnel school in increase productivity performance in order to realize vision and mission from school That himself . Mulyasa (2017) stated that leadership in schools have contribution in a way direct to results Study participant educate , so that style leadership head school is hope in increase quality education .

According to Danim (2012) there a number of type leadership namely : (1) leader autocratic , (2) leader democratic (3) leaders permissive . Meanwhile, Purwanto (2016:48) stated that there is three style fundamental leadership namely : (1) autocratic ; (2) laissez faire; (3) democratic . Although in its implementation head school No only use One type style leadership .



Teacher is one of the element key in system education , especially in schools . All component other , start from curriculum , facilities , costs , and so on No will Lots means if essence learning that is teacher interaction with participant educate No quality . Teacher performance is performance Work or show work obtained somebody in carry out duties and responsibilities . Teacher performance and competence carry not quite enough answer main in transformation orientation participant educate from ignorance become know , from dependence become independent , from No skilled become skilled , with methods learning No Again prepare participant passive education , but rather participant educate always knowledgeable capable absorb and adapt self with information new with think , ask , explore , create and develop ways certain in solve related issues with his life . ( Kawimbang , 2012)

Based on results interviews conducted researchers with teachers at SMPN 1 Darul Imarah revealed that style leadership used head school at every school different . But basically according to the teachers, they need figure a leader who protects and can give good role model . Related style leadership head school in increase teacher performance at SMPN 1 Darul Imarah Aceh Besar that during the leadership period previously according to the teacher still classified as simple and still not enough support For increase teacher performance . However , during the leadership period head school moment This Already There is difference with leadership head school previously . Where is the head school moment This already very caring with teacher performance , namely always give motivate teachers to increase its performance like give chance For follow training that can increase quality teacher performance , so that moment This Already There is Several teachers at SMPN 1 Darul Imarah Aceh Besar who are driving teachers and teachers practice at school Not only that . that , the principal of SMPN 1 Darul Imarah at that time this also passed as head school the driving force who also once get award as head school achievement in Aceh Besar. (RC Bogdan & Biklen, 2003)

In effort reach objective education national Teacher performance is greatly influenced by style leadership head school . A head school often use different styles depending on the needs . Phenomena that occur in the field according to results observation writer that head Darul Imarah 1 Middle School at the moment This so notice all factor key in make decision , head school use style leadership that is preferred by most teachers in schools the

## METHODS

Study This use approach qualitative with type study descriptive approach qualitative chosen Because study This aim For understand in a way deep phenomenon style leadership head school in increase teacher performance at SMPN 1 Darul Imarah Aceh Besar. Through approach this , researcher can dig information in a way comprehensive about practice applied leadership head school , the interactions that are established with teachers, as well as various influencing factors improvement teacher performance . Research descriptive used For describe conditions that occur in a way real in the field based on the data obtained from informant study .

Subject study consists of on head school , deputy principal schools , and several selected teachers purposively based on involvement they in implementation of improvement programs teacher performance at school . Data collection techniques were carried out through observation , interview in-depth , and study documentation . Observation used For observe in a way direct



activity leadership head school and implementation teacher's assignment . Interview done For get more information deep about experiences , views , as well perception informant related style leadership head school . Meanwhile that , documentation used For complete the data in the form of archives school , work program , report activities , as well as other relevant documents with focus study .

Data analysis was performed in a way interactive through three stages , namely data reduction , data presentation , and data extraction conclusion as put forward by Miles and Huberman. Data reduction is carried out with selecting and simplifying relevant data with focus research . The data that has been reduced Then served in form description narrative to make it easy understood and analyzed . Stage final is withdrawal conclusions and verification carried out in a way continuously during the research process ongoing . For ensure data validity , researchers use technique triangulation sources , triangulation techniques , as well as do checking repeat to information obtained from various informants and documents supporters .

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### **The Principal's Leadership Style in Improving Teacher Performance at SMPN 1 Darul Imarah**

Observations at SMPN 1 Darul Imarah indicate that the principal applies a combination of transformational and situational leadership styles to improve teacher performance. These two approaches are evident in various leadership strategies aimed at increasing teacher motivation, professionalism, and work enthusiasm in carrying out their duties. The choice of leadership style is strongly influenced by the school's internal conditions, such as individual teacher needs, organizational climate, and the personal characteristics of educators. The principal appears to be an adaptive leader, responsive to the dynamics of the school environment, and able to adjust his approach based on the situation at hand. This finding is reinforced by positive interactions between the principal and teachers, both in terms of communication, providing direction, and supporting teacher competency development. In general, the leadership style implemented contributes significantly to creating a conducive work environment and encouraging improvements in the quality of teacher performance at the school. (Octavia & Savira, 2016)

In efforts to improve teacher motivation, the principal's role is strategic and crucial. An interview with the principal of SMPN 1 Darul Imarah in Aceh Besar revealed that one of his primary focuses in improving teacher performance is mentoring in teaching preparation.

*" I always try to be there to assist teachers, especially when developing learning materials. We adapt them to students' needs and, of course, adhere to the applicable curriculum. "* Furthermore, he emphasized the importance of classroom management. *" I often discuss with teachers how they manage their classes. Because,*



*according to I , an orderly and conducive class is very important success of the teaching and learning process , "*

The above statement show that head school operate function as mentors and supervisors so that teachers feel supported in create atmosphere optimal learning . The principal also added that:

*" A teacher's job isn't just about teaching in the classroom; it also requires patience, perseverance, and the ability to continuously innovate. I realize that a teacher's job isn't easy. Therefore, I strive to foster them, provide them with space to grow, and, of course, motivate them to remain enthusiastic about carrying out their duties. "*

Through the various approaches implemented, the principal has high hopes that teacher motivation and competence will continue to improve. This improvement is believed to have a direct positive impact on the quality of the learning process and the achievement of educational goals at SMPN 1 Darul Imarah.

The teaching and learning process is an integrated system that inseparably connects the roles of educators and students. In this regard, teachers are professionals who are required to possess specialized expertise in designing and implementing meaningful learning experiences. Students' success in achieving expected competencies depends heavily on the teacher's ability to manage learning effectively and innovatively. Meanwhile, the principal plays a strategic role as both a leader and a driving force in the entire educational process. He or she is responsible for providing the guidance, motivation, and support teachers need to optimally carry out their duties. To support this success, the principal is required to possess effective supervisory skills, particularly those related to the implementation of teacher duties, the professional development of teaching and educational staff, and the overall improvement of learning quality. (Syahputra et al., 2023)

In carrying out his duties, the principal of SMPN 1 Darul Imarah strongly emphasizes the importance of building good relationships and effective communication with teachers. The principal of SMPN 1 Darul Imarah explained that:

*" In improving teacher motivation and performance, the approaches I use most often are persuasive communication and a supportive work environment. I always try For approach the teacher with good way , is n't it? with pressure . If they feel appreciated and heard , usually they will more enthusiastic and open ," according to him , the head school No only functioning as manager , but also must become role model . Therefore That is me try For Keep going give example Good from aspect discipline work , openness to new ideas , as well as Spirit For Keep going learn . With approach This is me hope that teachers will also be encouraged For Keep going develop myself . I also always encourage teachers to believe in his abilities . Don't Afraid try matter new . I'm ready support , we are One team. If the teacher feels comfortable and motivated , then*



*automatic Spirit teaching him will also increased , and it has a big impact on the quality learning student "*

From the statement above show that style leadership implemented by the head SMPN 1 Darul Imarah more leads to a humanistic and contextual approach and does not fixated on one style certain , but rather adapt approach with teacher's situation and needs . Focus mainly is build Spirit sustainable work and creating environment conducive school For develop This approach aligns with Syafaruddin's view that transformational leadership is characterized by persuasive communication, inspiring idealism, intellectual admiration, collective motivation, and the ability to share and instill a shared vision in the educational work environment (Handayani et al., 2020) .

Based on results interview with one of the teachers at SMPN 1 Darul Imarah Aceh Besar explaining that :

*" Head school own role important in increase motivation teacher's work . One of the perceived approach directly by teachers effort head school in weave harmonious and open relationship with all over power educator . He That the person communicative and not guard distance with the teacher. So we feel appreciated and comfortable in Work , "*

Interview results show that style leadership head Schools at SMPN 1 Darul Imarah play a role significant in create environment conducive and motivating work environment for teachers. Approach communicative , attentive to welfare , as well as evaluation of a nature foster has push improvement teacher professionalism . In addition , internalization ethos Islamic work strengthens motivation intrinsic teacher, making the educational process No only as formal duties , but also as form not quite enough moral and spiritual responsibility .

From the results of interviews with teachers it also explains that:

*"We believe the principal at SMPN 1 Darul Imarah implements a very flexible leadership style. He knows when to give firm direction and when to simply provide moral support. He not only assigns tasks but also accompanies us when we face difficulties. He believes that a situational approach tailored to the abilities and needs of each teacher is very helpful in increasing work motivation. Every teacher is different, so his leadership style feels right and makes us more enthusiastic ."*

These findings align with Danim's (2009) view that to improve teacher motivation, principals need to foster positive collaboration, create a comfortable work environment, provide appropriate rewards, and align work with the institution's vision and mission. However, the most dominant leadership style employed by the principal of SMPN 1 Darul Imarah is transformational leadership. This style is reflected in the principal's efforts to encourage teachers to be more innovative, participatory, and have a strong sense of responsibility for school development. The principal provides teachers with space to



express ideas or opinions regarding school progress and actively inquires about and fulfills needs to support the learning process, such as teaching facilities and infrastructure. (Helmina & Giatman, 2023)

Furthermore, the principal also provides rewards and recognition for teacher performance, both formally and informally, which ultimately builds teacher confidence and commitment to improving the quality of teaching. The application of this transformational leadership style has been shown to positively contribute to improving teacher performance and motivation within the school environment.

### **The Principal's Leadership Style in Improving Teacher Performance Discipline at SMPN 1 Darul Imarah**

Based on observations at SMPN 1 Darul Imarah, it was clear that the principal plays an active role in enforcing discipline through exemplary behavior. The principal consistently arrives earlier than the rest of the school community and is the last to leave the school grounds. This is not merely a routine practice, but a form of leadership that sets a concrete example for teachers to maintain discipline in carrying out their duties, such as arriving before class begins and remaining in class until the end of the learning process. This approach indirectly creates a disciplined and professional work culture among teachers, which ultimately supports the creation of an effective and high-quality learning process. (Wati et al., 2022)

Observations also show that principals employ a combination of several leadership styles, namely transactional, visionary, and transformational, in an effort to improve teacher discipline. The transactional style is evident in the provision of clear rules and consequences for violations. The visionary style is reflected in the principal's ability to direct the school's long-term vision and engage teachers in achieving it together. Meanwhile, the transformational style is manifested in efforts to build strong interpersonal relationships, inspire teachers through role models, and encourage continuous self-improvement. (Sulastri et al., 2024)

These findings indicate that no single leadership style can effectively address all challenges in school leadership practice. Contextual use of various styles is an adaptive strategy that can minimize obstacles and bridge gaps in the implementation of leadership tasks. Therefore, flexibility in selecting and implementing leadership styles is key to building discipline and improving teacher performance overall.

Teacher discipline development is a crucial aspect of educational management, aimed at improving the effectiveness and professionalism of teachers in carrying out their duties and responsibilities. This activity is carried out in a planned manner as part of an effort to improve performance by strengthening work discipline. In this context, to identify



the principal's leadership style and approach to improving teacher performance discipline, the principal of SMPN 1 Darul Imarah explained that:

*" In carrying out my duties as principal, the first thing I emphasize to teachers is discipline, because I believe discipline is the main foundation. If we want the learning process to be effective and efficient, then all educators must have a disciplined attitude, both in terms of time, responsibility, and work ethic. Once discipline begins to develop, then I direct development to the aspect of teacher professionalism. We begin to pay attention to competencies, such as the ability to manage classes, develop learning materials, and participate in training or workshops that support the improvement of teaching quality ."*

Based on the interview results, it is understood that the principal of SMPN 1 Darul Imarah applies a leadership approach that emphasizes discipline development as the primary foundation for improving teacher performance. Discipline is considered a prerequisite for creating an effective and efficient learning process, which is then followed by professional competency development through improving pedagogical skills and participating in continuous professional development. This approach reflects the implementation of a strategic leadership style oriented towards improving the quality of education.

From the results of the interview with the principal, it was also explained that:

*"I choose a flexible leadership style, adapting to the school situation and teacher characteristics. Here, I combine transactional, visionary, and transformational styles. I use the transformational style to motivate teachers to be more disciplined than expected, while simultaneously building a shared vision and a positive school culture. The visionary style helps me convey the vision clearly and guide teachers towards professionalism. In addition, I also apply a situational approach by providing direction and emotional support according to each teacher's needs. In practice, I provide preventative coaching to build shared discipline and remedial action for teachers who violate the rules. By method This is me believe teacher discipline can increase and learning process walk effective ."*

In an effort to foster and improve teacher discipline, the principal said that one of the strategies implemented was through providing direct direction and implementing systematic steps, the principal said that:

*" Every time I have a meeting, I always remind teachers of the importance of discipline and adhering to the agreed-upon rules. He added that I strive to be a role model by arriving on time and maintaining personal discipline as an example for teachers. For supervision, the principal also appointed the vice principal for Public Relations as the teacher discipline coordinator. I believe that teacher discipline is crucial for the smooth running of the teaching and learning process. If teachers are disciplined, then*



*the school program can run according to plan, and students will emulate this positive attitude."*

Based on the results of the interview, it can be understood that the principal's leadership style in improving teacher discipline is exemplary and participatory, prioritizing direct instruction, consistent implementation of rules, and team involvement in supervision. This approach demonstrates that teacher discipline is seen as a key factor in ensuring the effectiveness of the learning process and the development of student character.

### **Obstacles faced by the Principal in Improving Teacher Performance at SMPN 1 Darul Imarah**

The results of an interview with the principal of SMPN 1 Darul Imarah revealed that in efforts to improve teacher performance, there are still a number of obstacles that are inhibiting factors in optimizing teacher performance achievement at the school.

Based on an interview with the principal of SMPN 1 Darul Imarah, it was discovered that efforts to improve teacher performance faced a number of significant challenges. One of the main obstacles faced was the limited facilities and infrastructure to support the learning process. The principal explained that the lack of learning facilities often made teachers uncomfortable in delivering material, thus impacting the effectiveness of the teaching and learning process.

Facilities and infrastructure are crucial components in supporting improved teacher performance. Therefore, limited infrastructure in schools is a significant obstacle to optimizing teacher performance. However, these obstacles are not allowed to persist. The principal continues to seek solutions by proposing the necessary facilities through official channels and maximizing the use of available resources within the school environment. (Khosiah & Maryani, 2020)

The principal's responsive and solution-oriented approach reflects a leadership style that adapts to challenges in the field. This demonstrates that, despite structural constraints, the commitment to continuously improving teacher performance remains a top priority in educational management at SMPN 1 Darul Imarah.

Based on field findings through interviews with the principal of SMPN 1 Darul Imarah, it was discovered that one of the main obstacles to improving teacher performance is the continued lack of discipline in carrying out their duties. Unpunctuality in arriving at school or entering the classroom is a crucial issue, considering that discipline is a fundamental element in building a professional and responsible work culture. Failure to comply with school regulations regarding teaching hours can directly impact the effectiveness of the learning process. (Hadi & Rahmat, 2023)



In addition to discipline issues, the principal also identified limitations in teachers' professional competence, particularly in classroom management and the implementation of effective learning methods. Some teachers were deemed to have not fully mastered learning strategies appropriate to students' needs, thus hindering the creation of a conducive and interactive learning environment. Mastery of various teaching methods is a fundamental competency that educators must possess to improve the quality of learning.

However, the principal did not remain silent in the face of these obstacles. Various efforts were implemented, including regular coaching, academic supervision, and direct motivation and guidance. The principal also emphasized the importance of an active role in monitoring and evaluating the teaching and learning process so that emerging problems could be identified and addressed quickly and appropriately. (Sudharta et al., 2017)

With a communicative and solution-oriented leadership approach, the principal consistently strives to create a work climate that supports improved teacher performance, despite facing a number of internal challenges. This approach demonstrates the importance of adaptive leadership in creating positive change within the school environment, particularly in building discipline and continuously improving teacher professional competence.

Based on data analysis and interviews with the principal of SMPN 1 Darul Imarah, several key obstacles hindering teacher performance optimization were identified. These obstacles include limited learning support facilities and infrastructure, low levels of discipline among some teachers, and a lack of understanding of effective and efficient learning management strategies. (Sulfemi, 2020)

The principal explained that facilities and infrastructure are essential elements in supporting the learning process. The lack of adequate learning facilities has the potential to disrupt teachers' comfort in delivering material and reduce the quality of learning interactions. Therefore, to address these limitations, the school has undertaken various strategic efforts, such as holding meetings with the school committee, submitting a request for assistance to the Youth and Sports Agency, and utilizing School Operational Assistance (BOS) funds and committee funds to meet the needs for books and other learning materials. (Puspitasari et al., 2022)

In addition to facilities, the principal also emphasized the importance of improving teacher discipline as a foundation for building a professional work ethic. To this end, several concrete steps have been implemented, such as activating a daily attendance system to monitor attendance and issuing warnings to teachers who repeatedly fail to fulfill their teaching duties without a clear reason.

Furthermore, the principal's lack of mastery of effective learning methods was also a focus of concern. Although not explicitly mentioned in the interviews, strategic approaches such as training, workshops, or academic supervision are relevant interventions to address



this obstacle. The principal continued to encourage teachers to improve their pedagogical competencies to create a more meaningful teaching and learning process that meets students' needs. (Harmendi et al., 2021)

Overall, despite facing a number of obstacles, the principal of SMPN 1 Darul Imarah demonstrated a strong commitment to finding adaptive and constructive solutions to improve teacher performance. This reflects the principal's strategic role as a transformational leader who focuses not only on administrative improvements but also on human resource development and strengthening a professional work culture.

## CONCLUSION

Based on results research , can concluded that style leadership head schools at SMPN 1 Darul Imarah Aceh Besar are flexible and adaptive with domination approach transformational combined with style situational . Head school play a role as an active motivator, coach and supervisor through communication persuasive , personal coaching , and support to development teacher competency . Approach humanistic and participatory leadership the capable create environment conducive , collaborative , and improvement - oriented work quality education so that impact positive to teacher performance and quality of the learning process .

In addition , the head school apply style leadership combinative that integrates approach transformational , transactional , visionary, and situational in accordance need school . Transformational style seen through giving motivation , role model , and opportunity development self for teachers, whereas style transactional realized through enforcement rule as well as giving rewards and sanctions . While that , the visionary style is reflected in delivery vision schools and teacher involvement in achievement objective together , while approach situational implemented with adapting leadership strategies to character and readiness of each teacher. The combination style the proven capable grow culture disciplined , professional , and quality - oriented work .

In effort increase teacher performance , principal schools also face various obstacles , such as limitations facilities and infrastructure , low discipline some teachers, as well as lack of mastery of effective learning strategies . To overcome obstacle said , head school do various step strategic , including procurement facility supporters , coaching discipline , supervision academic , as well as training For increase teacher competence . These efforts show responsive , adaptive and solution- oriented leadership in build culture professional work as well as support improvement quality education at SMPN 1 Darul Imarah Aceh Besar.



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